Backward districts in Karnataka

1801. SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have recently declared four districts in Karnataka as the most backward districts in the State;

(b) if so, the criteria for choosing only these districts;

(c) the details of all the additional allocation, assistance and relief from Government for these districts; and

(d) the long-term plans towards improving the conditions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN): (a) Yes, Sir. Four districts of Karnataka, namely, Gulbarga, Bidar, Chitradurga and Davangere have been covered under the Backward Districts Initiative of the Rashtriya Sam Vikas Yojana.

(b) The backward districts for coverage under the scheme have been identified on the basis of an index of backwardness comprising three parameters with equal weights to each, namely, value of output per agricultural worker, agriculture wage rate and percentage of SC/ST population. The number of districts to be covered in a State is based on the incidence of poverty and hence only four districts of Karnataka qualified for coverage.

(c) Rs. 45 crore is to be provided to the State Government for each district over a period of three years over and above the normal allocation.

(d) Under the scheme, a three year plan is prepared for each district which includes schemes to address the problems of low agricultural productivity, unemployment and to fill critical gaps in physical and social infrastructure.

Opportunities for the Scientists of the Indian origin

1802. DR. KARAN SINGH:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:
SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA:
SHRI C. PERUMAL:

Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Ministry had prepared a scheme to provide more

opportunities to Scientists and Technologists of Indian origin desirous of working on short-term projects in India;

(b) if so, whether any concrete schemes in this regard have been worked out by which it would be able to spend 2-12 weeks in an Indian laboratory and work on projects;

(c) if so, the other steps that Government propose to take to provide more opportunities for the scientists of Indian origin in the country; and

(d) whether it is a fact that the Scientists and Technologists of Indian origin settled in different countries had suggested that India should pick and choose the research areas according to its own socio-economic needs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) The Government has announced a scheme the details of which are being formulated. This scheme is entitled "Joint Project based Visit of Scientists and Technologists of Indian Origin Abroad (STIOs) into India" which will allow long term and sustained connectivity between STIOs abroad and Indian Science and Technology personnel working in academia, research laboratories and industry. STIO will be able to spend 2-12 weeks in an Indian laboratory and work on projects. The details are to be made public when full contours of the scheme are worked out.

(d) No, Sir.

New disaster warning system

1803. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to bring in a new disaster warning system in place of the existing one; and

(b) if so, the kind of deficiencies that were detected in the existing system with action plan of Government to make the system a fool-proof to take care of all kinds of natural calamities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND